

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

2. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. David Fox on 9/8/09.

3. Please replace the following claims:

Claim 1:

A method of searching for work elements for processing in a computing system having a primary queue of work elements and at least one secondary queue of work elements, a numerical priority value being associated with each of said work elements, the method comprising:

setting a priority bar to an initial value;

processing work elements from said primary queue until reaching a work element having a priority less than said initial priority bar;

setting the priority bar equal to a minimum of a priority limit and a highest priority of work elements left on said primary queue and a highest priority of work elements in said at least one secondary queue;

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if said primary queue contains a work element having a priority greater than or equal to said priority bar, processing said work elements;

if said primary queue contains a work element having a priority less than said priority bar, processing a work element from said at least one secondary queue.

Claim 3:

The method of claim 1 wherein:

Determining said initial value of said priority bar is determined based on the a priority limit and a priority vector.

Claim 7:

A system of searching for queued work elements for processing, the system comprising:

a primary queue of work elements, a numerical priority value being associated with each of said work elements;

at least one secondary queue of work elements, a numerical priority value being associated with each of said work elements,

a processor in communication with said primary queue and said at least one secondary queue, said processor implementing:

setting a priority bar to an initial value;

processing work elements from said primary queue until reaching a work element having a priority less than said initial priority bar;

setting the priority bar equal to a minimum of a priority limit and a highest priority of work elements left on said primary queue and a highest priority of work elements in said at least one secondary queue;

if said primary queue contains a work element having a priority greater than or equal to said priority bar, processing said work elements;

if said primary queue contains a work element having a priority less than said priority bar, processing a work element from said at least one secondary queue.

Claim 9:

The system of claim 7 wherein: said processor determining said initial value of said priority bar is based on the a priority limit and a priority vector.

Claim 13:

A storage medium encoded with machine-readable computer program code for searching for queued work elements for processing a primary queue of work elements and at least one secondary queue of work elements, a numerical priority value being associated with each of said work elements, said storage medium including instructions for causing a processor to perform:

setting a priority bar to an initial value;

processing work elements from said primary queue until reaching a work element having a priority less than said initial priority bar;

setting the priority bar equal to a minimum of a priority limit and a highest priority of work elements left on said primary queue and a highest priority of work elements in said at least one secondary queue;

if said primary queue contains a work element having a priority greater than or equal to said priority bar, processing said work elements;

if said primary queue contains a work element having a priority less than said priority bar, processing a work element from said at least one secondary queue according to priority values in said at least one secondary queue.

Claim 15:

The storage medium of claim 13 wherein: determining said initial value of said priority bar is determined based on the a priority limit and a priority vector.

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MengYao Zhe whose telephone number is 571-272-6946. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday Through Friday, 10:00 - 8:00 EST. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng-Ai An can be reached at 571-272-3756. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/Meng-Ai An/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2195